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ABSTRACT

Recent data indicate that women are underutilized and underrepresented in leadership roles in physical education at the higher education level, that the degree of underutilization and underrepresentation increases with the degree of power associated with the role in question, and that this situation is typical also of higher education in general and of other professional fields as well. This essay examines the concept of leadership current in leadership literature and analyzes several factors that affect both the attainment by women of leadership positions (particularly in physical education) and their behavior relative to the advancement of women once in those positions. Noting that the effects of sex discrimination on women may lead them to undervalue themselves as a group and even to undermine the careers of other women, the author suggests structuring professional opportunities in order to train women as leaders rather than continuing to socialize women into a system that perpetuates their underutilization. (Author/PGD)

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OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO LEADERSHIP BY WOMEN - Identification of Barriers: A Psycho-social Perspective.

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Since the early 1970's, concern has been voiced about the collective "place" of women in education. In particular, the Carnegie Commission (1973) conducted one of the most comprehensive studies on women in the education profession. The study's scope ranged from financial aid and admissions practices for undergraduate programs to career issues for women with PhD's. Based on the data collected, the Carnegie Commission Report (1973) concluded that: 1) women are underutilized in education -- that is, if you look at expected enrollment and employment patterns and compare them with actual patterns, there are -- with some exceptions -- fewer women than expected, 2) the higher the position, the greater the underutilization of women -- that is, the pyramiding pattern found for the careers of men is similar for women except the proportions of women in the upper levels is markedly smaller than expected, and 3) situational or external variables in educational institutions, rather than variables within the women themselves, produced a "systems effect" or "ecosystem" which, if unchanged, would perpetuate the underutilization of women in education.

While this data may be true for education in general, one could certainly question its validity for physical education. After all, physical education has a herstory of sex-separated departments and women have advanced into leadership positions through those departments. At least one woman physical educator has advanced into a college presidency, others have held positions as heads of women's departments, and others have published and been leaders in the profession (Spears, 1979).

Recent data, however, suggest that the patterns in the Carnegie Commission Report (1973) are true for the physical education profession as well as general education. Data collected in 1977 (Hoferek, 1980) indicates that differences exist between women and men on traditional indicators of

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career status such as degrees earned ($\chi^2 = 43.26$ df = 2 $p < .0001$), institutional position ($\chi^2 = 13.43$ df = 2 $p < .001$), and salary ($\chi^2 = 30.18$ df = 3 $p < .0001$). The 1977 data indicates that the percentages of women and men earning advanced degrees differ markedly, with a higher percentage of men earning doctorates (Figure 2). Similarly, a higher percentage of men are employed in colleges and universities (Figure 1) and earn over $20,000 (Figure 3). In regard to salaries, it should be noted that when years of teaching experience, degrees earned, institutional position, and whether a person coached or not are controlled, significant differences still exist between women and men, with men earning the higher salaries.

Using the Carnegie Commission criteria to examine leadership in the physical education discipline, the same patterns are found in physical education as in general education. That is, women appear to be underutilized and the higher the position, the greater the underrepresentation of women.

Another approach to examining leadership is to look at the power of a particular group in a profession. For example, a group may be a numerical minority, but hold powerful positions from which they exert leadership. This area is much more difficult to measure, but the little evidence gathered

recently indicates that women exert even less power and leadership than expected. For example, women who achieve their doctorates in physical education are freqeuently placed in initial positions unbefitting their preparation and aspiration -- that is, many more women (40%) than men (13%) doctorates were employed as activity teachers, despite their aspirations for teaching-research or administrative positions (Fallon, 1973). Further, only a small percentage of women publish research articles or are members of the Research Consortium (Safrit, 1979). Recent evidence indicates women are losing representation in power positions such as head of department and chair of graduate program (Fox, 1977). Therefore, the statistical patterns and the more subjective indicators coincide and demonstrate physical education has the same problems some other disciplines have -- the underutilization of women who could be leaders in the profession and the underrepresentation of women at the highest levels.

Leadership Framework

If the patterns are going to be changed and if a framework for examining the issues is to be established, the physical education profession could benefit from the scholarly work that has already been done on leadership issues for women in other fields.

What is leadership? In a general sense, leadership means to influence. In a more specific sense and, perhaps, closer to the meaning addressed in this paper, career leadership involves the scope of decision-making and conceptualization necessary to function in the position. The usual advancement pattern progresses from a technical or specialist role, to the more general role of

the middle manager, to the "broader and more conceptual decision-making and problem-solving functions" (Hennig and Jardim, 1978).

In studying how one advances to positions of leadership, the focus used to be on personality factors. That is, researchers used to find leaders, give them personality tests, and attempt to distinguish one personality pattern that identified the typical leader. It has become clear, however, that the old approach is a simplistic one and does not account for the diversity among leaders or for the differences in various situations which promote leadership. The more recent approach to leadership issues attempts to examine the interaction of the person and the situation (Denmark, 1977). In the process of examining leadership, many variables could be explored. However, this paper will be confined to a few of the most important general concepts in the current leadership literature.

Role Models and Tokens

One of the most relevant concepts underlying discussions about leadership involves an element of a theory called social learning theory. Essentially, social learning theory maintains that people learn how they should behave by observing models like themselves. If females observe other women exerting leadership by activities such as conducting high-level research, publishing articles, chairing departments, writing books, testifying at Congressional hearings, and serving on policy-making bodies like the U.S. Olympic Committee, the women are more likely to visualize themselves as capable and interested in fulfilling the same functions. So, the vision each woman forms of herself as a professional is related to what she sees other women doing in the field.

The systematic collection of data, therefore, on where women are in the profession serves a dual purpose: 1) the documentation of advances and declines, and 2) an indication of the presence or absence of role models for subsequent professional generations. It should be noted that the same method of learning operates for racial minorities in the profession. That is Blacks in leadership positions are role models for other Blacks, Hispanics in leadership positions are role models for other Hispanics, etc. Therefore, the need for female role models, women who are already in leadership positions, and for racial minority role models is frequently discussed in the leadership literature.

While the need for role models is being acknowledged, there may be a tendency to appoint one woman or one racial minority to important committees or governing bodies so the groups they represent may see it is possible to achieve a position in that institution. While the critical number of role models in leadership positions needed to facilitate learning has not been established, a few "tokens" will not promote leadership by women over long periods of time. Tokens are "likely to be found wherever a dominant group is under pressure to share privilege, power, or other desirable commodities with a group which is excluded. ... The token is a member of an underrepresented group, who is operating on the turf of the dominant group, under license from it." The token is qualified and credentialed for her position, but is an outsider. She also has high visibility. Two frequent conditions placed on tokens are serving as gatekeepers for their own group (restricting the numerical flow of outsiders into the profession) and not changing the system they have entered (Laws, 1975).

In discussing tokens, Mary Daly (1973) stated: "Often it happens that the woman who has achieved outstanding success... openly discourages other women from following her example. Having accepted her role as token in the higher echelons of the professional establishment, she adopts the attitudes of her male colleagues toward women who would aspire to follow the same road. Her words of discouragement and her lack of supportive sisterhood confuse and present a kind of 'double bind' situation to women who look to her for encouragement." In response to the damage done by women tokens to other women, Daly further asserted, "Ultimately, only women can eradicate the psychological violence done by and through women to members of our own sex, by giving support and by making each other conscious of what is in large measure an unconscious [process]."

While some women may be serving as "tokens" in the profession, other women who are in leadership positions may be functioning as gate-openers for other women. One way gate-opening occurs is through the mentoring process, where a woman who is already established serves not only as a role model, but as a guide and facilitator for the careers of other women.

Opportunities and Rewards

Two variables in the leadership literature which are supportd by learning theory is the provision of opportunities to learn leadership skills and rewards for the leadership skills that have been learned. Both provisions may be more difficult for women to obtain in physical education now that departments have been merged. It has been shown, for example, that in single-sex situations women must, and do, lead. Women's colleges have "produced a

disporportinate number of women leaders and women in responsible positions in society" (Carnegie Commission, 1973). In coed situations, there is a tendency for men to dominate. For example, top leadership positions in campus organizations and activities at coed institutions nearly always go to men (Carnegie Commission, 1973). Men also tend to dominate communication patterns in coed groups. For example, when coed faculty meetings were taped for a study of communication patterns, men faculty members were shown to take more turns speaking and to speak longer per turn than women faculty members (Eakins and Eakins 1978 in Bowers and Hummel, 1979). If women are to continue to lead in physical education, then, efforts to examine leadership training with consideration for the recent change, for both faculty and students, from single-sex physical education departments to coed departments should be made.

In regard to rewards for leadership efforts, it should be noted that rewards can range from the social approval of colleagues to tangible variables such as salary and appointment to high status positions. According to Duquin (1979), problems encountered by women in seeking rewards include: "outright discrimination in the form of lower starting pay, fewer promotions and smaller raises, less recognition for achievement, and more frequent placement in dead-end jobs." Continued disparities between women and men on salaries, especially disparities that cannot be explained by typical variables such as years teaching, would devalue leadership by women in the profession by implying that women leaders are worth less than men leaders.

Images of Women Leaders

A major theme in the leadership literature is the perception, or misperception, of women in general in relation to professional advancement. Duquin (1379) stated: "The woman who decides to seek leadership status must learn to deal with both the misperceptions of her coworkers and supervisors as regards the proper role of women in organizations... ." For example, "supervisors may expect more from a woman worker than a male employee because women like to 'help out' and are noted volunteers. Or a boss may expect less of a woman by assuming she is less competent and has a great inability to cope with job pressures and stress. Often an aggressive and competent woman will be excluded from informal groups, will not be taken seriously, or will be perceived and treated as a threat to surrounding male egos" (Duquin, 1979).

Another aspect of stereotypic perceptions is the notion of internal role conflict for women in leadership positions. Essentially, role conflict assumes women perceive themselves as highly expressive and lacking instrumentality. That is, females see themselves as high on characteristics such as warm, gentle, and sensitive but low on characteristics such as makes decisions easily, acts like a leader, and willing to take risks. Since instrumental characteristics are necessary for leadership positions, one might expect women to be in conflict when in leadership positions (Butler, 1976). The role conflict assumption is not supported by recent evidence. Women in physical education tend to see themselves as both expressive and instrumental. That is, women physical educators tend to rate themselves high on both clusters of characteristics and see themselves in as more "balanced" (Hoferek, in press). Therefore, theoretically, women leaders in physical education would not experience internal role conflict when they are in leadership positions.

The concept of external role conflict, however, may be applicable to the woman physical educator. External role conflict refers to the logistics, i.e., time commitment and energy, involved in fulfilling the demands of a professional career and of one's personal life. The traditional resolution of external role conflict for women in the profession has been to not marry, to drop out of the profession after marrying, or to assume the role of married woman in addition to the role of professional woman. That is, women who married "added" the demands of married life onto the demands of the profession. Thus, external role conflict may be an issue for women aspiring to leadership positions in physical education.

Another area of misperception is the notion of a "fear-of-success" motive in women. That is, at one time, scholars believed that the marked under-achievement of women in our society could be explained by a personality factor called "fear-of-success", where females would avoid achieving (Horner, 1972). When it was demonstrated that the phenomenon was dependent on the number of females in the situation, the concept had to be re-evaluated. Apparently, achievement related conflict may be related to the number of individuals like oneself in the achievement situation, rather than to a personality factor (Condry and Dyer, 1976). Applied to physical education, this line of research suggests that one or two women in leadership positions will not reduce achievement related conflicts but a high proportion of women will.

Research

The absence of scholarly work and systematic data collection on issues related to leadership by women is a serious issue. In her essay, "The

Politics of Research," Donna Shavlik (1979) maintains that until women's studies programs were established, there was almost no research on women. Furthermore, Shavlik asserts that research on women is political. For example, an early political action taken by women's studies researchers was to "make sure that survey research was classified by sex and race." Inclusion of the two variables is important because without them, women and racial minorities cannot learn about themselves. It is also important for policy analysis. That is, research can be directed to policy questions, rather than "pure" research questions, and the results may affect policy decisions such as allocation of funding to certain groups or the need for social legislation. In this regard, "facts are power, and power translates into policy" (Shavlik, 1979). One reason women may not have been included in research data is that few women are in positions where research can be conducted (Ekstrom, 1978) and the need for women to conduct research in physical education has recently been documented (Safrit, 1979).

Racial/Ethnic Minority Women

Some literature on racial minority issues discusses the double discrimination of being a racial minority and a female. For example, Black women earn less than Black or White men, or White women with the same education (in Frieze, et al, 1978). In the physical education literature the most noticeable issue on racial/ethnic minority women is their absence in professional information and research. Documentation of the contributions of Native American, Hispanic, Black, and Asian American women to the profession are absent, as is research on their status.

Women as Leaders in Physical Education

To deal with stereotypic attitudes and with the general situation in the profession, the past approach may have been to socialize the women to fit into the situation in the profession. In the process of professional socialization, a strong occupational or professional identity is formed. That is, individuals incorporate an image of the professional into their vision of themselves. The neophyte learns the norms and expectations of the profession and acts according to them. Thus, the professional socialization process is also a homogenizing process (Coombs, 1978). During socialization, then, an individual adjustment model -- where individuals are changed to "fit in" rather than where situations are changed to accommodate diverse individuals -- may have been used. The formula for success for women in academia has been described as follows:

> "You must be better qualified than the man. You must be more articulate. You must be more aggressive. You must have more stamina to face inevitable setbacks. You must have more patience, since you will advance more slowly. Above all, you must remain feminine and not threatening." If you are Black add: You "must be better than White women." (Bean and Wolfman, 1980).

The effects of the double standard on women may be similar to the effects of discrimination on other minority groups. Anger, frustration, a sense of loneliness, and alienation have been reported by women in other professions (Hilberman, et al., 1975). In addition, the general literature on reactions to oppression indicate two common patterns: "extropunitiveness or punishment of others and ... intropunitiveness or self-punishment. In particular, two [manifestations of these patterns] -- identification with the dominant group and aggression against one's own group -- are frequently found in women"

(Frieze, et al., 1978). The first pattern is found in studies which show women as well as men feel that women as a group are inferior to men. That is, women value themselves and other women less than they value men. The second pattern may take the active form of a phenomenon called minority group self-hatred where women will actually undermine the careers of other women (Frieze, et al., 1978).

Rather than socializing women into the system, an alternative approach to the situation is to examine institutional or external variables that could foster leadership by women. That is, professional opportunities could be structured to train women to be leaders and qualified women could be advanced into high-level positions.

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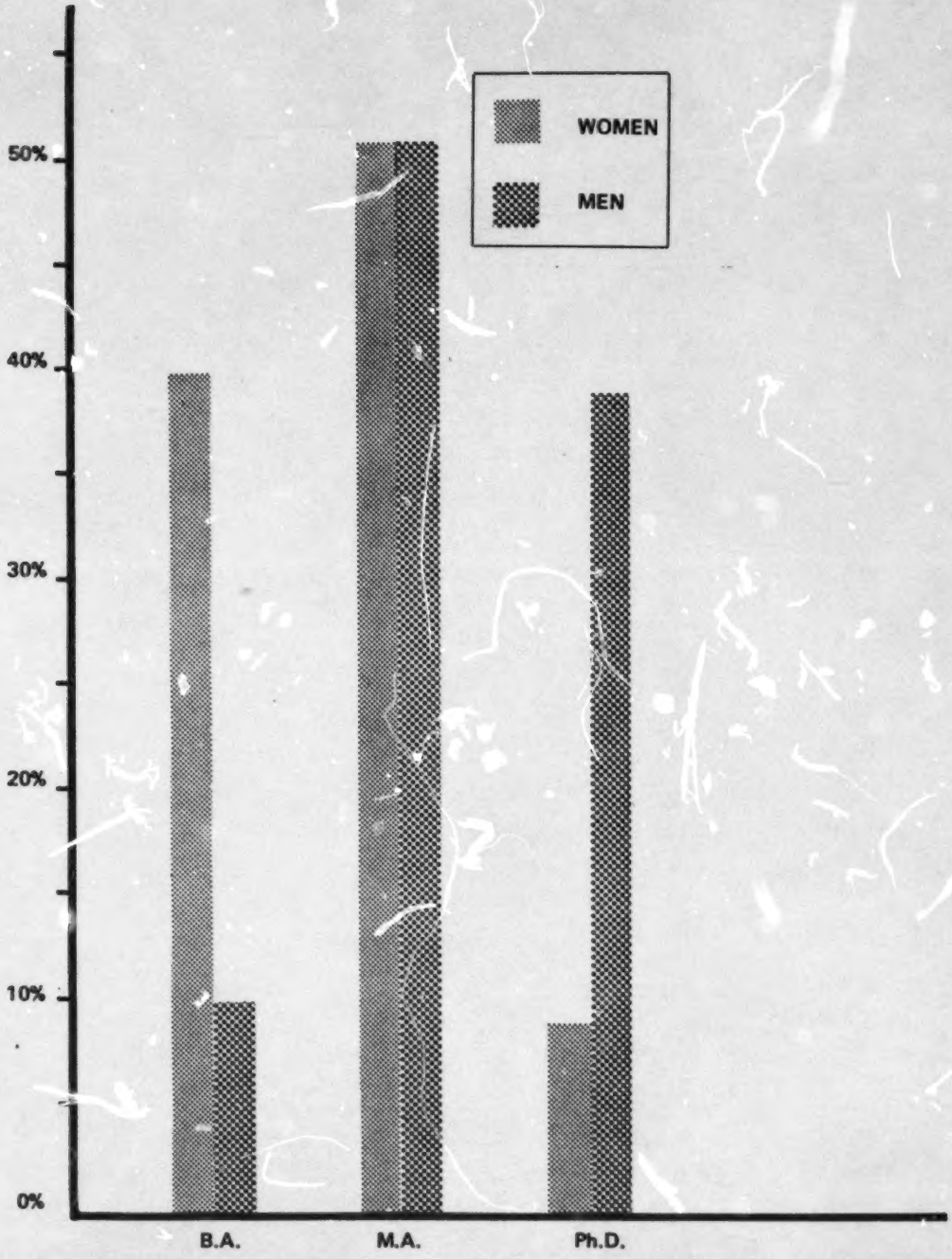

Fig. 1

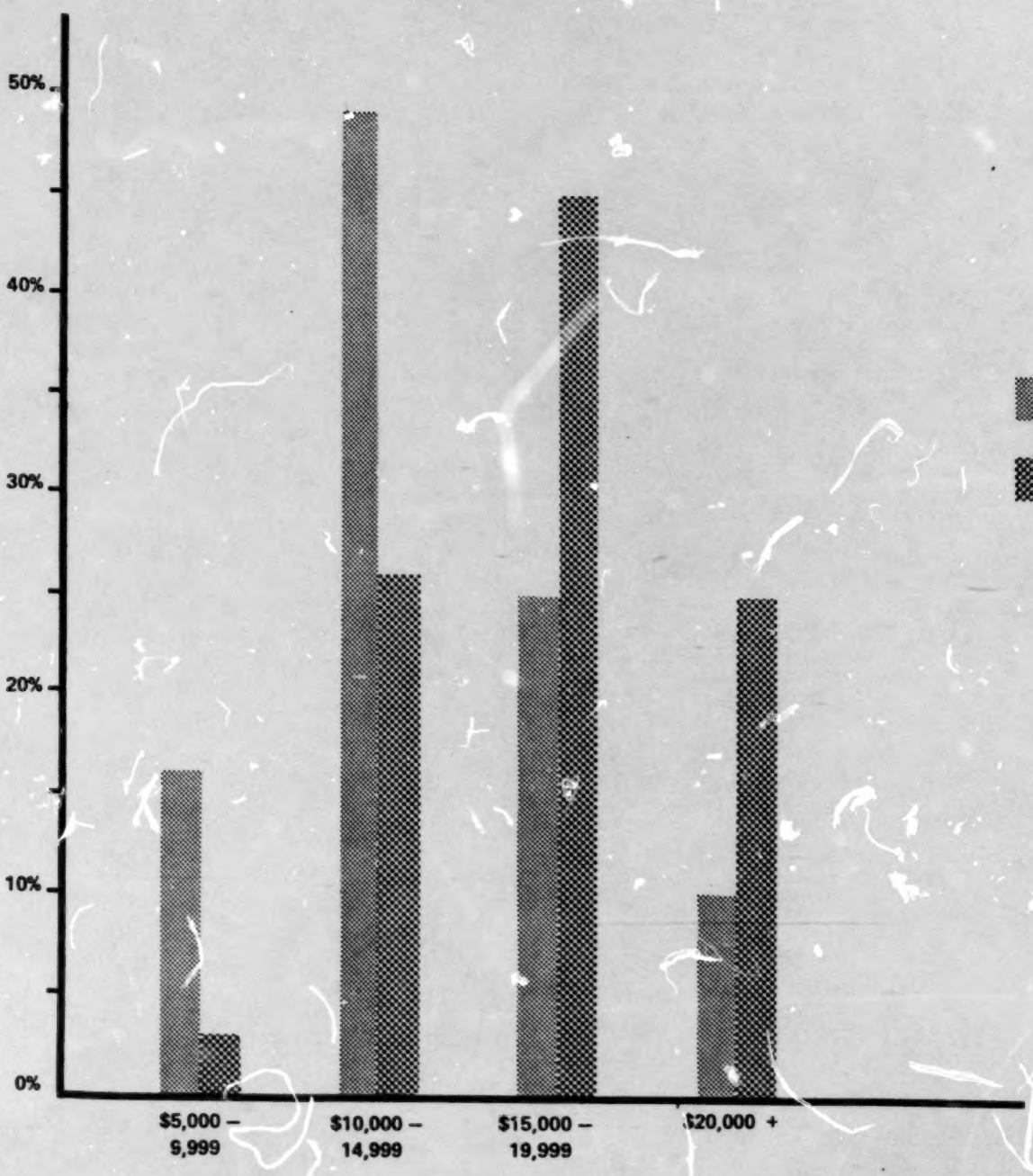
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Fig. 2

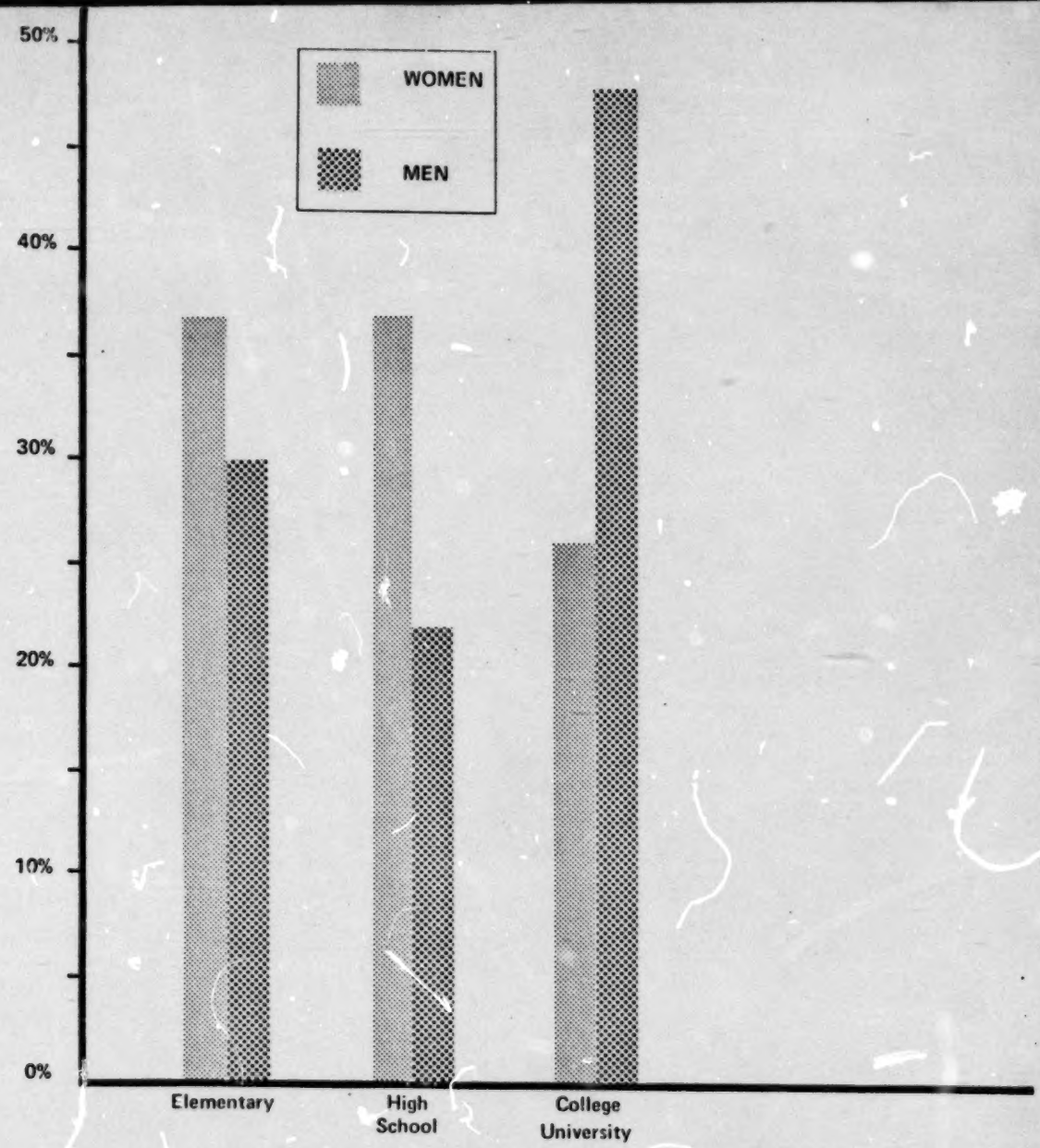
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Fig. 3